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Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Assistance



BJA FY 21 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (formula)

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Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applications for funding under the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program. This program furthers the Department's mission by providing states with tools needed to meet the challenges of crime and justice. Specifically, this program seeks to improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants on how to prepare and submit applications for funding to OJP. **If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.**

This solicitation expressly modifies the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide by not incorporating the "Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver" provisions in the "Financial Information" section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Resource Guide.

Eligible Applicants:

State governments, Other

Other

For purposes of this solicitation—

- A state/local government entity performing forensic science services is considered a "forensic science laboratory" if it employs one or more full-time scientists:
 - With a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a natural or formal science (e.g., chemistry, physics, biology, computer science, or a closely related field) and
 - Whose principal function is to examine, analyze, and interpret physical and/or digital evidence in criminal matters and provide reports and testimony to courts of law regarding such evidence.
- Law enforcement units operating outside of the crime laboratory function, such as crime scene units and other entities that engage exclusively in evidence collection and documentation, are not forensic science laboratories for these purposes.
- Medical examiner and coroner offices are treated as forensic science laboratories.

State Administering Agencies (SAAs) apply on behalf of states, including any state government entity.

For purposes of this solicitation, the term “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, [Grants.gov customer support webpage](#), or email at support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For technical assistance with submitting the **full application** in DOJ's Justice Grants System (JustGrants), contact the JustGrants Service Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175. The JustGrants Service Desk operates 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern time, Monday–Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov or JustGrants technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Response Center (Response Center) at grants@ncjrs.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the Response Center by telephone at 800-851-3420 or TTY: 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only) or by email at grants@ncjrs.gov. Response Center hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Submission Information

In FY 2021, applications will be submitted to DOJ in a **NEW** two-step process.

Step 1: Applicants will submit an **SF-424** and an **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. To register in Grants.gov, applicants will need to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal.

Step 2: Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov.

To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants Application deadline.

OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

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Program Description

Overview

The Department of Justice is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

BJA seeks proposals for formula funding under the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (the Coverdell Program), which awards grants to states and units of local government to improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services. Under the Coverdell Program, State Administering Agencies (SAAs) may apply for both formula and competitive funds. This solicitation is ONLY for SAAs applying for the formula funds. An applicant that seeks to apply for Coverdell competitive funds (consistent with 34 U.S.C. § 10563(a)(2)) available for grants to eligible states and units of local government would need to apply under BJA's FY 2021 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Competitive) solicitation.

Statutory Authority

The Coverdell Program is authorized by Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, Part BB, codified at 34 U.S.C. §§ 10561-10566 (the Coverdell law).

Specific Information

The Coverdell Program provides funding to states to improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government.

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Goals

The result of Coverdell grants to applicant states should be a demonstrated improvement over current operations in forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services provided in the state, including services provided by laboratories operated by the state and services provided by laboratories operated by units of local government within the state. Reduction in forensic analysis backlogs is considered an improvement in timeliness of services.

Objectives

A state or unit of local government that receives a Coverdell grant must use the grant for one or more of the following six purposes:

1. To carry out all or a substantial part of a program intended to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services in the state, including those services provided by laboratories operated by the state and those operated by units of local government within the state.
1. To eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence, including, among other things, a backlog with respect to firearms examination, latent prints, impression evidence, toxicology, digital evidence, fire evidence, controlled substances, forensic pathology, questioned documents, and trace evidence. A backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence exists if forensic evidence has been stored in a laboratory, medical examiner office, coroner office, law enforcement storage facility, or medical facility and has not been subjected to all appropriate forensic testing because of lack of resources or personnel.
1. To train, assist, and employ forensic laboratory personnel and medicolegal death investigators, as needed, to eliminate such a backlog.
1. To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology (such as high throughput automation, statistical software, and new types of instrumentation).
1. To educate and train forensic pathologists.
1. To fund medicolegal death investigation systems to facilitate accreditation of medical examiner and coroner offices and certification of medicolegal death investigators.

Note: Congress has appropriated funding to help the forensic science community address the specific challenges crime laboratories are confronting related to the proliferation of opioids and synthetic drugs. To address these issues, BJA plans to allocate approximately 57 percent of available funds to specifically target the challenges that opioid and synthetic drugs have brought to the forensic science community.

Deliverables

All Coverdell grantees are required to report specific programmatic metrics (see Performance Measures). In addition, the applicant is asked to consider what other metrics may be of use in demonstrating the successful outcome of the program/project.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed under the Application and Submission Information section.

Evidence-Based Programs or Practices

OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policymaking and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. For additional information and resources on evidence-based programs or practices, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) section entitled "Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities."

Federal Award Information

Awards, Amounts and Durations

Anticipated Number of Awards

55

Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount of Awards

\$2,329,519.00

Period of Performance Start Date

10/1/21 12:00 AM

Period of Performance Duration (Months)

24

Anticipated Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation

\$29,696,563.00

Availability of Funds

This solicitation, and awards (if any are made) under this solicitation, are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by the agency or by law. In addition, nothing in this solicitation is intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

Available Funding

The figures and calculations reflected in this solicitation (for example, the estimated minimum award to states and the estimated amount of formula funds, by state) are based on an estimated total amount available of \$29,696,563, although the amount ultimately made available could be higher or lower. Applicants are strongly advised to check for updates to the solicitation prior to submitting applications.

1. Formula Funds for States

85 percent of the funds available for Coverdell grants will be allocated among eligible states based on population (state formula funds). The approximate amount each eligible state would receive if \$29,696,563 were made available for FY 2021 is listed at [Estimated Amount of FY 2021 Formula Funds, by State](#). Under the provisions of the Coverdell law,

several factors, including the number of eligible state applicants, affect formula amounts. These are the ONLY funds that will be distributed among eligible applicants under this solicitation.

An applicant that seeks to apply for Coverdell competitive funds (consistent with 34 U.S.C. § 10563(a)(2) available for grants to eligible States and units of local government would need to apply under BJA's FY 2021 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Competitive) solicitation.

2. Minimum Awards to States

The Coverdell law sets a floor for the total amount an eligible applicant state will receive as its Coverdell grant. If \$29,696,563 were to become available for FY 2021, the minimum Coverdell grant to an eligible state would be not less than \$296,966. In that case, if the amount a state would otherwise receive as its total Coverdell funding (including both formula funds and any competitive funds) is less than \$296,966, BJA will increase that state's total funding to \$296,966. (Minimum awards for America Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands would be lower.)

Availability of Funds

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Types of Awards

BJA expects to make awards under this solicitation as grants. See the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants (and cooperative agreements).

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. The "Part 200 Uniform Requirements" means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R. Part 2800, which adopts (with certain modifications) the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Budget Information

Permissible Expenses

The types of expenses listed below generally may be paid with Coverdell funds. Federal funds must be used to supplement existing state and local funds for program activities and must not supplant those funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose. **Note:** The following list details the types of expenses allowed under the Coverdell program. These expenses should **NOT** be used as budget categories—instead they are to be incorporated into the appropriate standard OJP budget categories.

1. **Salary and benefits of laboratory employees.** Funds may be used for forensic science or medical examiner/coroner office personnel, fellowships, visiting scientists, interns, consultants, or temporary staff.
2. **Overtime for laboratory staff.** Funds may be used to pay overtime for laboratory scientists (excluding executive personnel) to directly examine, analyze, and interpret physical and/or digital evidence in criminal matters. Any payments for overtime must be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the DOJ Financial Guide.
3. **Computerization.** Funds may be used to upgrade, replace, lease, or purchase computer hardware and software for forensic analyses and data management.
4. **Laboratory equipment.** Funds may be used to upgrade, lease, or purchase forensic laboratory or medical examiner/coroner office equipment and instrumentation.
5. **Supplies.** Funds may be used to acquire forensic laboratory or medical examiner/coroner office supplies.

Recipients may encounter delays in the release of award funds pending satisfactory completion of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process for applications involving the use or purchase of chemicals.

1. **Accreditation.** Funds may be used to prepare for laboratory accreditation by the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB), National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME), the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), International Association of Coroners & Medical Examiners (IAC&ME) or other appropriate accrediting bodies. Funds also may be used for application and maintenance fees charged by appropriate accrediting bodies. Per 34 U.S.C. § 10562(2), such an accrediting body would be “an accrediting body that is a signatory to an internationally recognized arrangement and that offers accreditation to forensic science conformity assessment bodies using an accreditation standard that is recognized by that internationally recognized arrangement[.]”

An applicant that proposes to use any portion of the grant amount to fund a forensic science laboratory system, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, that is not accredited (as set out in the Coverdell law) will be required to use (or, as applicable, must require any unaccredited subrecipient forensic science laboratory system to use) a portion of the grant amount for accreditation purposes. Coverdell awardees must use grant funds to prepare and apply for accreditation of any FY 2021 Coverdell grant-funded unaccredited forensic laboratory system, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, not more than 2 years after the FY 2021 Coverdell award date.

Note to SAAs regarding laboratories seeking accreditation: In order to carry out the aims of and meet requirements under the Coverdell law with respect to forensic science laboratory accreditation, SAAs are expected to consider the accreditation status of all forensic science laboratories within their states. As part of a complete application package, each SAA is to prepare a list of all forensic science laboratories in the state that specifies each forensic science laboratory's accreditation status by an appropriate accrediting body, the name of the accrediting body, and the scope of each accreditation. For each forensic science laboratory within the state lacking accreditation, each SAA is to request funds in its application budget and include plans in its program narrative for such laboratories to prepare and apply for accreditation. This serves one of the purposes of the Coverdell statute by helping to ensure that those labs that may need assistance in preparing and applying for accreditation have access to funds to assist in that purpose.

- **Education, training, and certification.** Funds may be used for appropriate internal and external training of staff who are involved directly and substantially in providing forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services. In appropriate cases, funds also may be used for fees charged by appropriate certifying bodies for certification of staff in specific forensic discipline areas. All education, training, and certification activities must be designed to improve forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services. The grant application should demonstrate that the proposed training or certification is directly related to the job position and duties of the individual(s) receiving the training or seeking certification.

OJP recognizes the benefit of attending discipline-related conferences to receive training and/or education; however, it is recommended that the applicant consider the cost-effectiveness of this option compared to other viable modes of training. For example, hosting onsite training or attending a local program may be more suitable for the applicant's personnel and organization.

- **Facilities.** Funds may be used for program expenses relating to facilities, provided the expenses are directly attributable to improving forensic science or medical examiner/ coroner services. Funds also may be used for renovation and/or construction undertaken as part of the applicant's program to improve forensic science or medical examiner/ coroner services.

Limitations on use of funds for costs of new facility. The Coverdell law limits the amount of funds that may be used for the costs of a new facility or facilities (see 34 U.S.C. § 10564(c)). Maximum amounts are determined by the total amount of the Coverdell grants received (including both formula and competitive funds) and the total amount of funds available for Coverdell grants nationwide. The maximum amounts that may be used for costs of new facilities are as follows. (Estimates and calculations are based on the assumption that the total available funds for Coverdell awards in FY 2021 will be \$29,696,563. Please refer to the discussion under “Available Funding.”)

Grants that exceed 0.6 percent of the total available funds. If an applicant state receives total grants that exceed 0.6 percent of the total available funds (estimated here at \$178,179), the amount of the grant that can be used for the costs of any new facility cannot exceed the sum of 80 percent of 0.6 percent of the total available funds (such as 80 percent estimated here at \$142,543) plus 40 percent of the amount of the grant in excess of 0.6 percent of the total available funds.

For example, if \$29,696,563 were to become available for Coverdell awards in FY 2021 and a state were to receive a total Coverdell grant of \$296,966, no more than \$190,058 may be used for the costs of any new facility.

A sample calculation for a \$296,966 grant would be as follows:

80 percent of 0.6 percent of the total available funds: $\$178,179 \times .80 = \$142,543$.

Amount in excess of \$296,966: $\$296,966 - \$179,179 = \$118,787$

40 percent of amount in excess of \$296,966: $\$118,787 \times .40 = \$47,515$.

Sum of \$142,543 + \$47,515 = \$190,058.

- **Administrative expenses.** Not more than 10 percent of the total amount of a Coverdell grant may be used for a recipient's administrative expenses.

Note on use of funds for forensic genealogy searches: Grantees utilizing Coverdell funds for forensic genealogy testing must adhere to the United States Department of Justice Interim Policy Forensic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching (<https://www.justice.gov/olp/page/file/1204386/download>). In accordance with Section IX, Coverdell grantees must collect and report the following metrics to BJA:

1. The type of crime investigated.
2. Whether forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis (FGG)/ forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis and searching (FGGS) was conducted on a forensic sample or a reference sample.
3. The type of forensic sample subjected to FGG, and a description of the total amount, condition, and concentration of that sample (e.g., single source, mixed profile, degradation status, etc.).
4. Whether FGG analysis resulted in a searchable profile.
5. The identity of the vendor laboratory used to conduct FGG and the genetic genealogy service(s) used to search the FGG profile.
6. Whether the investigation resulted in an arrest that was based, in part, on the use of FGGS.
7. The total amount of federal funding used to conduct FGG/FGGS in each case.

Note on the use of funds to address opioid- and synthetic drug-related challenges: The application should demonstrate, wherever applicable, how any proposed use of funds would address challenges that opioids and/or synthetic drugs have brought to the forensic science community. To facilitate this, an applicant should annotate each line item in the budget as "opioid and/or synthetic drug related" or "non-opioid or synthetic drug related." Coverdell funds are available for permissible uses that would not address the opioid- and synthetic drug-related challenges; however, states should plan to allocate **at least** 57 percent of Coverdell grant funds (commensurate with each state's specifically identified need) to address the challenges to the forensic science community posed by the opioids and synthetic drugs. A state also may propose to dedicate more than 57 percent of its Coverdell allocation to opioid and synthetic drug related uses, in

accordance with the state's needs.

A state that does not intend to include any opioid- or synthetic drug-related projects in its request for Coverdell funds, or that intends to request an amount for opioid and/or synthetic drug related projects that would amount to less than 57 percent of its FY 2021 Coverdell allocation, will still receive the full FY 2021 formula allocation for which it is eligible. Any such state will be expected to affirm—in a separate writing (See Application and Submission Information for details)—that, of its total allocation, it intends to use less than 57 percent (or, zero, as applicable) of the grant funds for opioid and synthetic drug related projects.

Expenses That Are Not Permitted

- **Funds to conduct research.** Applicants may address emerging forensic science issues and technology through implementation of new technologies and processes into public laboratories.
- **Expenses other than those listed above** (including expenses for general law enforcement functions or non-forensic investigatory functions).
- **Costs for any new facility** that exceed the limits described above.
- **Recipient administrative expenses** (direct or indirect) that exceed 10 percent of the total grant amount.
- The **use of funds for the purchase and/or lease of vehicles** such as crime scene vans.

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match.

Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs).

Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Eligibility Information

States may apply for FY 2021 formula Coverdell funds. For purposes of the Coverdell Program, the term “state” means each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. For certain purposes, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands are treated as one state. States may be eligible for both formula and competitive funds. This solicitation is **ONLY** for the formula funds. Any state application for funding **MUST** be submitted by the Coverdell SAA (see list of SAAs on the OJP website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/saa/index.htm). (Other interested state agencies or departments must coordinate with their respective SAAs.) SAAs are expected to consider the accreditation status of forensic science laboratories within their states in formulating their requests for formula funding.

See the eligibility section on the solicitation cover page for details on what BJA considers a “forensic science laboratory” for purposes of this solicitation.

Note: A prospective recipient of grant funds that is found to have an “unresolved audit finding” from a DOJ Office of the Inspector General audit, as described at 34 U.S.C. § 10263, will be ineligible to receive grant funds during the period specified in that statute. See 34 U.S.C. § 10263(2).

The Coverdell law (at 34 U.S.C. § 10562) requires that, to request a grant, an applicant for Coverdell funds must submit:

- **A certification and description regarding a [plan for forensic science laboratories](#).** Each applicant must submit a certification that the state has developed a plan for forensic science laboratories under a program intended to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner services in the state, including such services provided by the laboratories operated by the state and those operated by units of local government within the state. Applicants must also specifically describe the manner in which the grant will be used to carry out that plan.
- **A certification regarding use of [generally accepted laboratory practices](#).** Each applicant must submit a certification that any forensic science laboratory system, medical examiner's office, or coroner's office in the state, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, that will receive any portion of the grant amount (whether directly or through a subgrant) uses generally accepted laboratory practices and procedures established by accrediting organizations or appropriate certifying bodies.
- **A certification regarding [forensic science laboratory accreditation](#).** Each applicant must submit a certification that any forensic science laboratory system in the state, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, that will receive any portion of the grant amount (whether directly or through a subgrant) either is accredited, **OR**, is not so accredited, but will (or will be required in a legally binding and enforceable writing to) use a portion of the grant amount to prepare and apply for such accreditation not more than 2 years after the date on which a grant is awarded under the FY 2021 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program.

Applicants requesting funds for **ONLY** medical examiner's offices or coroner's offices in the state are not required to submit this certification. See 34 U.S.C. § 10562(2).

- **A certification and description regarding [costs of new facilities](#).** Each applicant must submit a certification that the amount of the grant used for the costs of any new facility constructed as part of a program to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner services will not exceed certain limitations set forth in the Coverdell law at 34 U.S.C. § 10564(c). (See information on "permissible expenses" in section B. Federal Award Information' of this solicitation.) Applicants must also specifically describe any new facility to be constructed as well as the estimated costs of the facility.
- **A certification regarding [external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct](#).** Each applicant must submit a certification that "a government entity exists and an appropriate process is in place to conduct independent external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct substantially affecting the integrity of the forensic results committed by employees or contractors of any forensic laboratory system, medical examiner's office, coroner's office, law enforcement storage facility, or medical facility in the state that will receive a portion of the grant amount."

Applicants are expected to carefully review the requirements of each certification before determining whether the certification properly may be made. Any certification that is submitted must be executed by an official who is both familiar with the requirements of the certification and authorized to make the certification on behalf of the applicant agency (that is, the agency applying directly to BJA). **Certifications must be submitted using the templates provided at [Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program | Funding | Bureau of Justice Assistance \(ojp.gov\)](#).**

Certifications made on behalf of subrecipients of award funds—rather than certifications made on behalf of the agency applying directly to BJA—are **NOT** acceptable to satisfy the certification requirements and should not be submitted.

In connection with the certification regarding external investigations (described above), applicants **must** provide, prior to receiving award funds, the name(s) of the existing "government entity" (or government entities). This information is to be provided as an attachment to the program narrative section of the application using the [External Investigations Attachment Template](#).

In connection with the certification regarding forensic science laboratory accreditation (described above), applicants **MUST** demonstrate, prior to receiving award funds, that any forensic science laboratory system, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, that will receive any portion of the grant amount either is accredited or will (or will be required to) prepare and apply for accreditation consistent with the Coverdell law. See the "Permissible Expenses" section, which describes the documentation and information an applicant is to provide regarding its accreditation or its plans to prepare and apply for accreditation.

The accrediting body must be a signatory to an internationally recognized arrangement and must offer accreditation to forensic science conformity assessment bodies using an accreditation standard that is recognized by that internationally recognized arrangement. The scope of the accreditation must include all discipline(s) for which funds are requested. If the current scope of accreditation does not include the discipline(s) for which funds are requested, the applicant must include funds in its budget and plans in its program narrative to prepare and apply for accreditation in those disciplines.

Please note that funds will not be made available to applicant agencies that fail to provide the necessary information.

Important Note on Referrals in Connection with Allegations of Serious Negligence or Serious Misconduct

The highest standards of integrity in the practice of forensic science are critical to the enhancement of the administration of justice. BJA assumes that recipients (and subrecipients) of Coverdell funds will make use of the process referenced in their certification as to external investigations and will refer allegations of serious negligence or misconduct substantially affecting the integrity of forensic results to government entities with an appropriate process in place to conduct independent external investigations, such as the government entities identified in the grant application.

For each fiscal year of an award made under this solicitation, recipients will be required to report to BJA on an annual basis:

- The number and nature of any such allegations.
- Information on the referrals of such allegations (e.g., the government entity or entities to which referred, the date of referral).
- The outcome of such referrals (if known as of the date of the report).
- If any such allegations were not referred, the reason(s) for the non-referral.

Payments to recipients (including payments under future awards) may be withheld if the required information is not submitted on a timely basis.

Special Guidance on Certification Regarding External Investigations into Allegations of Serious Negligence or Misconduct

The certification regarding external investigations has a number of requirements, each of which must be satisfied before the certification may be made. The official authorized to make the certification on behalf of the applicant agency must carefully review each of the statutory elements and this guidance before determining whether a certification properly may be made. After reviewing the information and guidance provided here, the official, on behalf of the applicant agency, must determine whether:

- A government entity exists
- With an appropriate process in place

- To conduct independent, external investigations
- Into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct
- Substantially affecting the integrity of the forensic results
- Committed by employees or contractors
- Of any forensic laboratory system, medical examiner's office, coroner's office, law enforcement storage facility, or medical facility in the state that will receive a portion of the grant amount.

Note: In making this certification, the certifying official is certifying that these requirements are satisfied not only with respect to the applicant itself, but also with respect to **each** entity that will receive a portion of the grant amount. Certifying officials are advised that:

- A false statement in the certification or in the grant application that it supports may be the subject of criminal prosecution, including under 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and/or 1621 and 34 U.S.C. §§ 10271-10273.
- Office of Justice Programs grants, including certifications provided in connection with such grants, are subject to review by the Office of Justice Programs and/or by the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General.

The following guidance, provided by way of examples for applicants' review, is designed to illustrate elements of the external investigation certification that the official authorized to make the certification on behalf of the applicant agency must consider in determining whether the certification properly may be made.

Because it is not possible for BJA to provide examples relating to every type of government entity with an appropriate process in place to conduct independent, external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct substantially affecting the integrity of the forensic results committed by employees or contractors, this guidance should not be viewed as all inclusive. In addition, this guidance is not intended to constitute legal advice from BJA on the question of whether the required certification properly may be made on behalf of the applicant. Such a determination must be made by an appropriate official based on the statutory requirements of the certification after review of this guidance.

Illustrative Examples:

- A state intends to distribute Coverdell award funds to state and local forensic laboratories and medical examiner's/coroner's offices. There is an Office of the Inspector General (OIG) in the state with authority to conduct investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by employees and contractors of forensic laboratories and medical examiner's/coroner's offices, both at the state and local levels.

Guidance: Execution of the certification might be appropriate under these facts. Nevertheless, the certifying official must be satisfied that the state IG's authority in this regard is not circumscribed in such a way that the IG's ability to conduct independent investigations is limited (for example, through a reporting hierarchy that does not provide for the IG to report directly to the chief executive officer or another equally independent state official or office).

- An applicant agency determines that the forensics laboratory director (or some other individual in the chain of command at the laboratory) has sole responsibility to conduct investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct committed by laboratory employees.

Guidance: Under these circumstances, execution of the certification would not be appropriate because there is no process in place to conduct independent, external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct committed by laboratory employees and contractors.

- A state applicant intends to distribute Coverdell award funds to forensic laboratories at both the state and local levels. An independent commission established by the governor has authority to investigate allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by employees, including employees of units of local government within the state.

Guidance: Under these circumstances, the existence of this commission is not itself a sufficient basis for execution of the certification. In this regard, the commission does not have authority to investigate allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by contractors of state and local government forensic laboratories that receive Coverdell funds. (If, however, some other government entity, distinct from the commission, has a process in place to conduct independent external investigations of allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by such contractors, execution of the certification might be appropriate depending on all the facts.)

- A local forensic laboratory, which is intended to receive a portion of the funds from a Coverdell award to a state, notifies the state applicant that a quality assurance official is responsible for investigating allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by employees and contractors of the local forensic laboratory. The quality assurance official reports to the director of the forensic laboratory.

Guidance: Under these circumstances, execution of the certification would not be appropriate because the quality assurance official reports to the director of the forensic laboratory; therefore, there is no process in place to conduct independent, external investigations of allegations against the forensics laboratory as required to make the certification.

- An applicant agency (a forensics laboratory) intends to employ a contractor or a nongovernmental organization to conduct investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct committed by laboratory employees.

Guidance: Under these circumstances, execution of the certification would not be appropriate as there is neither a government entity, nor an appropriate process in place to conduct independent, external investigations of allegations against the laboratory, whether alleged to be committed by laboratory employees and/or contractors, because the contractor or nongovernmental entity is employed by and responsible to the forensics laboratory.

- An applicant agency is accredited by an independent accrediting or certifying organization such as ANAB, NAME, A2LA, IAC&ME, etc.

Guidance: In this situation, execution of the certification would not be appropriate. The fact of accreditation or certification by an outside entity on its own does not demonstrate that the agency has a process in place to investigate allegations of serious negligence or misconduct committed by employees or contractors. There is insufficient information to properly make the required certification in this situation.

For information on cost sharing or matching requirements, see [Federal Award Information](#).

Application and Submission Information

See the Application Elements and Formatting Instructions section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on what happens to an application that does not contain all the specified elements or that is nonresponsive to

the scope of the solicitation.

Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 will be submitted in Grants.gov. The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

In Section F of the SF-424, please include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete application materials in JustGrants**. JustGrants will use this information (*email address*) to assign the application to this user in JustGrants.

Intergovernmental Review: This solicitation ("funding opportunity") is subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). An applicant may find the names and addresses of state Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) at the following website: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>. If the applicant's state appears on the SPOC list, the applicant must contact the state SPOC to find out about, and comply with, the state's process under E.O. 12372. In completing the SF-424, an applicant whose state appears on the SPOC list is to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19, once the applicant has complied with its state E.O. 12372 process. (An applicant whose state does not appear on the SPOC list should answer question 19 by selecting the response that the: "Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the state for review.").

Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. Applicants will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, applicants will need to: add zip codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and verify the organization's legal name and address.

Proposal Abstract

A proposal abstract will be completed in the JustGrants Web-based form. The abstract should summarize the proposed project in **400** words or less. Proposal abstracts should:

- Be written for a general public audience.
- Provide an outline **limited to the scope of the FY 2021 Coverdell Program**.
- Example format:
 - One to two sentences for description of the issue.
 - Three to four sentences outlining how this year's award will be utilized.
 - One to two sentences describing the outcome.

Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative must specifically describe the manner in which Coverdell grant funds will be used to carry out the state plan to improve the quality and/or timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner's/coroner's office services over current operations. (Reduction of forensic analysis backlogs is considered an improvement in timeliness of services.)

States are expected to consider the needs of laboratories operated by units of local government as well as those operated by the state.

If grant funds are requested for costs of a new facility, the proposal narrative must specifically describe the new facility to be constructed and the estimated costs of that facility.

If grant funds are requested for projects to address the challenges to the state's forensic science laboratories posed by opioids and/or synthetic drugs, the proposal narrative should describe the challenges posed and how the requested funds would help to address them.

Accreditation

If grant funds are requested for accreditation, the proposal narrative must describe accreditation activities and plans and, as applicable, the projected schedule for preparation for and application for accreditation. Under the Coverdell Program, any forensic science laboratory system, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, that is not accredited (as set out in the Coverdell law) and that will receive a portion of the grant amount must use a portion of the grant amount to prepare and apply for accreditation not more than 2 years after the date of the Coverdell grant award. For purposes of this solicitation, see the eligibility discussion on the solicitation cover page for the definition

of “forensic science laboratory.” Additionally, after ascertaining the accreditation status of all forensic laboratories within its state, each SAA is to include within the program narrative plans for each forensic science laboratory within its state lacking accreditation to prepare and apply for accreditation.

The proposal narrative should be submitted as a separate attachment with an appropriately descriptive file name in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point Times New Roman font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 20 pages. Pages should be numbered and submitted as an attachment. If the proposal narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJA may negatively consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections must be included as part of the proposal narrative:

- a. Description of the Issue
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures

Note: applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under “Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables.”

Applicants can also visit OJP’s performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Award recipients will be required to submit performance measure data and performance reports in JustGrants. Examples of the performance measures questionnaire can be found <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/Coverdell-Measures.pdf>. Further guidance on the post-award submission process will be provided, if selected for award.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance under “Note on Project Evaluations” in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Applicants will submit the FY 2021 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program goals, objectives, deliverables, and timelines in the JustGrants web-based form.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form)

Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based budget form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Applicants will submit their indirect cost rate agreement by uploading the agreement as an attachment in JustGrants. See

the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)

Applicants will download the questionnaire in JustGrants and submit by uploading the completed questionnaire as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Additional Application Components

The applicant will attach the requested documentation in JustGrants.

Coverdell Statutory Certifications

Coverdell Statutory Certifications

As described above in the Eligibility Information section, the Coverdell law provides that, to request a grant, each applicant **must** submit **five** certifications specific to the Coverdell program. (Applicants requesting funds for **only** medical examiner's offices or coroner's offices in the state are not required to submit the certification regarding accreditation. See 34 U.S.C. § 10562(2).) A certification may only be completed by an official familiar with its requirements and authorized to certify on behalf of the applicant agency (i.e., the agency applying directly to BJA). **All five** certifications **must** be completed using these templates. Certifications made on behalf of subrecipients of award funds—rather than certifications made on behalf of the agency applying directly to BJA—are **not** acceptable to satisfy the certification requirements.

The five required Coverdell statutory certifications are as follows:

1. [Certification as to Plan for Forensic Science Laboratories](#)—Application from a State
2. [Certification as to Generally Accepted Laboratory Practices and Procedures](#)
3. [Certification as to Forensic Science Laboratory System Accreditation](#)
4. [Certification as to Use of Funds for New Facilities](#) (This must be submitted even if no funds are proposed to be used for new facilities.)
5. [Certification as to External Investigations](#)

External Investigations Attachment

All applicants are to provide the name(s) of the existing “government entity” (or entities) that is the subject of the certification that:

A government entity exists and an appropriate process is in place to conduct independent external investigations into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct substantially affecting the integrity of the forensic results committed by employees or contractors of any forensic laboratory system, medical examiner's office, coroner's office, law enforcement storage facility, or medical facility in the state that will receive a portion of the grant amount.

Note: Funds **will not be made available** to applicant agencies that fail to provide the necessary information.

The five certifications and the external investigations attachment should be attached as a separate file with an appropriately descriptive file name.

Forensic Laboratory Accreditation Documentation (if applicable)

Applicants should provide documentation of current accreditation with the application for any accredited laboratory (including a subrecipient laboratory) that is to receive funds under the FY 2021 Coverdell award. Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number. Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include ANAB, NAME, A2LA, IAC&ME, or other appropriate accrediting bodies. (Per 34 U.S.C. § 10562

(2), such an accrediting body would be “an accrediting body that is a signatory to an internationally recognized arrangement and that offers accreditation to forensic science conformity assessment bodies using an accreditation standard that is recognized by that internationally recognized arrangement[.]”) Note that funds **will not be made available** to applicant agencies that fail to provide the necessary information.

Accreditation document(s) should be attached as a separate file with an appropriately descriptive file name.

Accreditation Status of all Forensic Laboratories within the State

Each applicant is to prepare a list of all forensic science laboratories in the state that specifies each forensic science laboratory’s accreditation status and, if applicable, the name of the accrediting body and the scope of each accreditation.

The accreditation status documentation should be attached as a separate file with an appropriately descriptive file name.

Statement Regarding Proposed Use of Funds to Address Challenges Posed by Opioids and/or Synthetic Drugs (if applicable)

See the “**Note on the use of funds to address opioid- and synthetic drug-related challenges**” in the Budget Information section above, under Federal Award Information, for an important discussion relevant to applicants requesting funds to address forensic science challenges relating to opioids and/or synthetic drugs.

A state that does not intend to include any opioid- and synthetic drug-related projects in its request for Coverdell funds, or that intends to request an amount for opioid- and synthetic drug-related projects that would amount to less than 57 percent of its FY 2021 Coverdell allocation, is to prepare and submit a statement (signed by the authorized representative of the applicant) affirming that, of the total FY 2021 allocation for which it is eligible under the FY 2021 Coverdell grant program, the state intends to use none of the funds for opioid and synthetic drug projects or, if applicable, that it intends to use less than 57 percent (the statement should specify the approximate percentage) of its grant funds for opioid- and/or synthetic drug-related projects.

This document should be attached as a separate file with an appropriately descriptive file name (for example, “Opioids and Synthetic Drugs Use of Funds Statement”).

Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Each applicant is to submit a BJA Programmatic Coversheet and Checklist with its application to assist BJA in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the activities proposed for funding by the applicant. Specifically, the applicant is expected to:

- Carefully read the [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#).
- Complete the [Cover Sheet and the attached the Programmatic Checklist](#).
- Attach the completed documents to the grant application.

The applicant should also submit a Cover Sheet and BJA Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the Budget Worksheet that will receive grant funds through a subaward or procurement contract to perform any of the following activities: new construction or renovations that change the basic prior use of a facility or significantly change the size, research and/or technology development that could be expected to have an effect on the environment, or implementation of programs involving the use of chemicals. For more information about NEPA and BJA’s NEPA Process, please go to <https://bja.ojp.gov/national-environmental-policy-act-nepa-guidance>.

Disclosures and Assurances

Applications will complete the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants will complete and submit the SF-LLL in Grants.gov. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances

See DOJ Certified Standard Assurance on the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items

Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information

DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

Applicants will review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)

If applicable, applicants will submit as an attachment in JustGrants See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information. A DOJ High Risk Grantee is a recipient that has received a DOJ High Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, or noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible.

How to Apply

Applicants will submit an **SF-424** and an **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at <https://justgrants.usdoj.gov/>.

For additional information, see the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424** and the **SF-LLL** will be submitted in Grants.gov by June 24, 2021 at 11:59 pm. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

The **full application** will be submitted in JustGrants by July 8, 2021 at 11:59 pm. To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

Application Review Information

Review Process

Subject to the availability of appropriated funds, states that satisfy the specific requirements (including eligibility requirements) outlined in this solicitation, the general requirements for BJA and OJP grants, and all other applicable legal requirements may expect to be awarded formula funds or minimum awards determined in accordance with the Coverdell law.

OJP reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with the solicitation. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the application review process for this solicitation.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also

reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

Important note on FAPIIS: An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider any such comments by the

applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, the Assistant Attorney General will make all final award decisions.

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance).

For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on information technology security.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

In addition to the deliverables described in the Program Description, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports. Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, performance metrics, progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

In addition, Coverdell grantees are required to submit a final report that must, among other things: (1) include a summary and assessment of the program carried out with FY 2021 grant funds, (2) identify the number and type of cases accepted during the FY 2021 award period by the forensic laboratory or laboratories that received FY 2021 grant funds, (3) cite the specific improvements in forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services (including any reduction in forensic analysis backlog) that occurred as a direct result of the FY 2021 grant award, and (4) detail the progress of any unaccredited forensic science service provider that received FY 2021 grant funds toward obtaining accreditation.

Further, as noted earlier under “Eligibility Information,” for each fiscal year of an award, recipients will be required to report to BJA on an annual basis:

- 1) The number and nature of any allegations of serious negligence or misconduct substantially affecting the integrity of forensic results.
- 2) Information on the referrals of such allegations (e.g., the government entity or entities to which referred, the date of referral).
- 3) The outcome of such referrals (if known as of the date of the report).
- 4) If any such allegations were not referred, the reason(s) for the non-referral.

Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measures data.

Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For OJP contact(s), see solicitation cover page.

For contact information for Grants.gov and JustGrants, see solicitation cover page.

Other Information

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a).

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on how to Provide Feedback to OJP.

Performance Measures

Award recipients will be required to submit performance measure data and performance reports in JustGrants. Examples of the performance measures questionnaire can be found <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/Coverdell-Measures.pdf>. Further guidance on the post-award submission process will be provided, if selected for award.

Application Checklist

Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Formula)

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

What an Applicant Must Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire a DUNS Number (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov
- Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

Review the "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2021 Awards](#)" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Scope Requirement:

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of the [Estimated Amount of FY 2021 Formula Funds, by State](#).

Eligibility Requirement:

- State governments - State Administering Agencies (SAAs) apply on behalf of states, including any state government entity
- Submit **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov

After SF-424 and SF-LLL submission in Grants.gov, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:

- Submission has been received in Grants.gov
- Submission has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

If No Grants.gov Receipt and Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:

- Contact Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at [Grants.gov customer support webpage](#), or email at support@grants.gov regarding technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Receive email notification to complete application in JustGrants:

- Complete Application in JustGrants

Content of Application Submission

- Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov
- Intergovernmental Review
- Standard Applicant Information (SF-424 info from Grants.gov)
- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget and Associated Documentation
 - Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative
 - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Additional Application Components
- Coverdell Statutory Certifications
 - [Certification as to Plan for Forensic Science Laboratories](#)—Application from a State
 - [Certification as to Generally Accepted Laboratory Practices and Procedures](#)
 - [Certification as to Forensic Science Laboratory System Accreditation](#)
 - [Certification as to Use of Funds for New Facilities](#)
 - [Certification as to External Investigations](#)
- [External Investigations Attachment](#)
- Forensic Laboratory Accreditation Documentation (if applicable)
- Accreditation Status of all Forensic Laboratories within the State
- Statement Regarding Proposed Use of Funds to Address Challenges Posed by the Opioids and/or Synthetic Drugs (if applicable)
- Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist
- Disclosures and Assurances
 - [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
 - Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

- DOJ Certified Standard Assurance (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Submit Application in JustGrants:

- Application has been successfully submitted in JustGrants

If JustGrants Application Submission, Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:

- Contact JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175 regarding technical difficulties